

Partial Translation of Reference 3

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[A]

Column 15, Line 30 to Column 16, 33

[0033] The contents distribution service system of this embodiment will be further described by referring to a flowchart schematically illustrating the procedures of the contents distribution system 10 shown in FIGS. 3 and 4. Firstly, in step 51, the user 90 connects the information terminal system 30 to the contents distribution system 10. Any one of several connection modes is acceptable, and if the information terminal system 30 is connected to an access point provided by the contents distribution system 10 as a provider via a public telephone network, the connection mode will be dial-up connection mode. Of course, it is possible to establish a connection via the Internet 1. In each case, both user authentication and connection processing are carried out, and only a user who has been registered can make an access.

[0034] When the user is authenticated successfully, if the browser has started up on the information terminal system 30 side, more specifically, on the PC 31 of the information terminal 30, a home page provided by the WWW server 11 is output and the user can select the map service section 11a therefrom, in step 52. Meanwhile, in the following explanation, the information terminal system 30 will be used as a generic term expressing a user-operable system. Incidentally, if the map service section 11a is not selected, another service is selected in step 53.

[0035] In step 52, if the URL of the map service section 11a is selected, respective applications (engines) of the contents distribution server 16 become operative through CGI or the like, and start contents distribution service for the user. At the stage of selecting this map service section 11a, the system 10 may reconfirm by password or the like whether or not the user has been registered.

[0036] As contents distribution service is started, in step 54, the user receives an inquiry about whether or not a route search should be made. The route search will more specifically be explained later. If the user makes no route search, in step 55, he or she enters information to specify a search range of

location for segmentation of a map and information to specify a search object for extraction of contents. In this embodiment, as information to specify a search range of location, the user enters information about a destination. Further, as area information, the user enters information about a spot such as a station name. The input operation is carried out by transmission/reception of form data to/from each engine through CGI or the like.

[0037] FIG. 5 shows an example of an input form. FIG. 5(a) is a form 101 for entering information about a destination. The user can specify a destination by entering any one of address, postal code, station name, spot name and a location on the map, which are described on the form put up on the home page. A form 102 shown in FIG. 5(b) provides input fields for area information in the upper half thereof. In the fields, spot information such as a name of the nearest spot and the nearest station are entered. Further, the user can designate a map segmentation range by specifying the scale of representation of the map. The lower half of the form 102 of FIG. 5(b) is a portion for entering a search target to select contents by category. When the user enters an appropriate keyword or a combination of keywords, a relevant category is automatically set up, and contents belonging to the category are extracted.

[A]**Column 17, Line 16 to Column 18, 22**

[0041] FIG. 4 details step 60 (first output process) for distributing map information and step 70 (second output process) for distributing a contents list. Firstly in step 61, the related-map creation/distribution engine 19 distributes, to the information terminal system 30, an abridged map that is created by superimposing indices on the segmented map. The abridged map is configured to be easily looked at without much difficulty by a user, no matter how the display of a PC is set up. Also, the abridged map is limited in display size, so that it is readable by any information terminal system.

[0042] If the map information displayed on the information terminal system 30 is not the one the user 90 desires or when the user wants to go over the process, he or she can return to the steps of entering a search range and search conditions to segment a map and extract contents again. If the abridged map information displayed is sufficient, the user 90 designates data format for outputting the map to the printer 32 in step 62. The data format includes type, size and color of a file, and the maker and model of the printer. Then, in step 63, map data subject to printout is generated in accordance with the format designated in step 63, and in step 64, distributed to the information terminal system 30. The map data sent from the contents distribution system 10 to the information terminal system 30 may be sent directly to the printer 32 for printout, or may be downloaded once in a memory area of the PC 31, so that the map data can be printed out from the printer 32 at appropriate time.

[0043] Next, in step 65, whether or not a contents list should be distributed is determined. When the process proceeds to step 70, where a contents list is distributed, first in step 71, a destination of distribution of the contents list can

be input. It is possible to set by default the phone number of the cell phone 5 of the user 90 or e-mail address thereof accessible by a cell phone. In step 71, as a matter of course, it is also possible to designate the information terminal system 30, and download the contents list in the information terminal system 30 and print out the contents list from the printer 32 to create a poster as well as a map. It is also possible to transfer the downloaded contents list to a portable terminal in hand.

[0044] When a distribution destination is entered, the contents list distribution engine 21 creates a contents list in step 72. Of course, the turn of these steps is changeable within the scope of not affecting the processing. Next, in step 73, it is determined whether or not an abridged map outputtable to the cell phone 5 should be created. If the creation of such a map is required, in step 74, the resolution of the map is lowered to the degree of enabling the map to be displayed on the display 5a of the cell phone 5, so that the map can be distributed along with the contents list in the form of an e-mail attachment, for example. Further, in step 75, it is determined if the user is making a route search. If the user is making a route search, the contents list distribution engine 21 creates crossing-over information in step 76. The route search and crossing-over information will more concretely be explained later.

[0045] Further, in step 77, the contents list distribution engine 21 selects some proper advertisements from the advertising database 14 utilizing the information such as search range and search target, and includes the advertisements in the contents list. Then, the contents list distribution engine 21 distributes the contents list in step 78.

[FIG. 3]

(a) Start

51: Connection

52: Map service

53: Another service

(b) End

54: Route search

55: Input of destination, area and category

56: Map segmentation

57: Contents extraction

58: Superimposition

60: Map distribution

70: Contents list distribution

81: Billing

82: Input of departure place, destination and category

83: Route search

84: Route information creation

[FIG. 4]

(a) Start

51: Abridged map distribution

52: Input of map output format

- 63: Map data creation
- 64: Map distribution
- 65: Request for contents list distribution
- (b) End
- 71: Input of distribution destination
- 72: Contents list creation
- 73: Request for abridged map
- 74: Creation of abridged map
- 75: Route search
- 76: Creation of crossing-over information
- 77: Advertisement extraction
- 78: Contents list distribution
- (c): Return